

Conference on Disarmament

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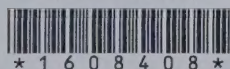
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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN**Final record of the one thousand three hundred and sixtieth plenary meeting**


Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 8 July 2015, at 3.05 p.m.

President: Mr. Henk Cor van der Kwast (Netherlands)

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The President: I call to order the 1360th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament. As the climate around us gets warmer and warmer, I hope and trust that here we will have a sensible debate. I discussed with quite a number of you, at length, the draft decision on the appointment of a special coordinator to seek views and receive proposals on the methods of work of the Conference on Disarmament.

The draft decision has been issued in all the official languages as document CD/WP.589 and was made available to delegations in their boxes. Before submitting the draft decision to the plenary for adoption, I would like to give the floor to any delegations so wishing. My idea is to have a short discussion on this draft and then to take action on it; after that, there will be room for some discussion. The Chair of the Group of 21 has informed me of a request to discuss some of the positions that were expressed this morning. I have said to him that I am quite open to having a short discussion on that this afternoon, and I have offered to see if that is possible for the members of the Group, as I fully realize that these days are very packed for all of us. However, I am open to seeing the Group of 21 tomorrow morning, but that is for the Group to decide, so I will leave that to Ambassador Wibowo.

I would like now to turn to the draft decision. The floor is open. I would call on all of you to be as comprehensive and short as possible. Of course, we do not want anyone to cut short their views and points, but I would appreciate if we could have a brief discussion on this. I currently have one delegation on my list: the United States. Ambassador Wood, you have the floor.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): Let me begin, Mr. President, by saying how much my delegation has appreciated your willingness to consult on the issue of the draft decision on the appointment of a special coordinator to look into the working methods of the Conference on Disarmament. I know that you have worked tirelessly to try to address concerns and to find language that could command consensus. Your efforts should be applauded.

In the view of my delegation, it is important that action be taken on this text: a text, I might add, that easily — I repeat, easily — should find consensus in this body. In fact, this text is not as strong as we would like it to be. However, we can accept this document and we hope that others can do so as well. The Conference needs to be able to examine how it conducts its business in order to achieve the goals of improving its functioning and effectiveness. Let us approve this text and move forward.

The President: I thank the delegate of the United States. I now have the Ambassador of Iran on my list. Ambassador, you have the floor.

Mr. Naziri (Islamic Republic of Iran): Mr. President, let me first of all congratulate you on the assumption of your duties as the current President of the Conference on Disarmament. We assure you of the support of our delegation and wish you success in your endeavours during your presidency.

We thank you for the discussion on the draft decision on the appointment of a special coordinator for the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. In particular, we express our sincere thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Wai of Myanmar for the transparent and inclusive discussion which he held on the same issue.

I have to inform you, Mr. President, that we still believe that this issue is secondary to the main priority of the Conference of fulfilling its distinct responsibility to resume substantive work and to produce a balanced and comprehensive programme of work. So far, to respect the position of some of my fellow Conference members, we have constructively engaged to help achieve a sound decision, if so agreed. Despite all our sincere efforts in that regard, I have to acknowledge that it seems we are far from reaching a sound decision. In

our view, the draft is yet to be agreed; it requires further consultations. In our view, the draft decision has certain new elements that require thorough consideration by the Conference. Certain adjustments are needed to make it identical to previous decisions of the Conference with regard to methods of work, removing the mention from the title as well as from paragraph 1 to make it similar to the 2001 and 2002 texts.

On the issue of reporting by the special coordinator, it is necessary that the language be reverted to identical language of past decisions: "The Conference requests the special coordinator to report to it before the conclusion of the 2015 session". Those changes are proposed based on the established procedure of the Conference and come from the relevant language in documents CD/1667 and CD/1646. Having said that, Mr. President, you are fully aware of the discussion which has been held on this very important issue. However, we do not want to defer any kind of agreement on that with those adjustments that we propose. I hope that, with that understanding, we could be able to make those adjustments and take a sound decision on the draft as it has been proposed to the Conference.

Last but not least, we again emphasize that the *raison d'être* of the Conference's stalemate is not a malfunctioning of its methods of work; rather, it emanates from the disintegration of essential political ways to come up with a programme of work. Consequently, we believe all efforts should continue to be made towards a programme of work so that the Conference can start its work at the earliest.

The President: I thank the Ambassador of Iran. I do not see any further requests for the floor.

I have listened carefully, Ambassador, to your points on prolongation. We have considered that; we have talked with different colleagues about that possibility. The problem is that we need to take a decision now, because of the fact that Mr. Schmid — and this comes from a recent conversation I had with him — senses only a short space of time is left; if he is to be able to do a sincere job, he needs time for that. In view of that, unfortunately it is not possible to postpone this discussion anymore and, therefore, I would like now to submit document CD/WP.589 for adoption by the Conference on Disarmament. Are there any objections to that?

I recognize the Ambassador of Iran.

Mr. Naziri (Islamic Republic of Iran): Having said what our position is, Mr. President, we do not think that a hasty decision would help the Conference to start its work. Therefore, we cannot go along with this decision. I hope that it will be recorded as well that we are prepared — if certain adjustments are made to the text to make it identical to the 2001 and 2002 texts — Iran could support that text.

The President: That means that a decision is not adopted and I note the objections. I recognize the delegate from Algeria.

Mr. Khelif (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time the Algerian delegation is taking the floor under your presidency, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and to also assure you of our full support in your endeavours.

Algeria has always fully supported all initiatives that might enable the Conference to reinstate its work. At the beginning of the year, a number of draft decisions on the programme of work and other topics were submitted but, unfortunately, were not successful. In our opinion, broader consultations would have brought those drafts closer to maturity and enhanced the likelihood of their adoption.

It seems that today we are going along that same path. We have a draft decision on working methods, including the appointment of a special rapporteur on working methods. We fully understand the time constraints surrounding the appointment of the special

coordinator, the Ambassador of Switzerland, whom we thank for having taken on this responsibility. We have also listened to the proposals which were just presented by the Ambassador of Iran.

Would it not be appropriate, Mr. President, to grant more time to examine these proposed amendments now in plenary? It is possible that other delegations might not oppose the draft decision as amended by the Ambassador of Iran, knowing that the text he is proposing is based on a formulation that had already been supported by the members of the Conference.

I am simply asking that we give more of a chance to this proposal and that we try to develop it sufficiently. The Algerian delegation supports this initiative.

The President: Are there any other requests for the floor? That does not seem to be the case.

I see your point, but we have postponed this twice and, again, as I noted, Ambassador Schmid made it very clear to me that he needs to go ahead and he needs a mandate. He has been very kind to offer himself for this job. Apparently, after several rounds, there is not enough support for this, so I think we have to conclude our debate here.

I thank you for all your input and for your work. That is how it is. I open the floor now briefly for other issues, if anyone wishes to react to the non-adoption of the decision.

If that is not the case, then we will close the session here. I thank you for your time and we will see each other at the next plenary meeting, which will be on 4 August 2015. I look forward to seeing you then.

The meeting rose at 3.20 p.m.